

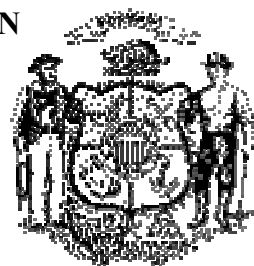


NEWS FROM WISCONSIN'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

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DELEGATION MAKES FINAL PUSH BEFORE BRAC LIST RELEASE

Letter to Secretary Rumsfeld Restates Value of Wisconsin's Bases

WASHINGTON, DC – All ten members of Wisconsin's Congressional Delegation sent a letter today to U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld reiterating their strong and unified support for Wisconsin's military bases in advance of the release of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) list. The Department of Defense has announced that the list will be made public on Friday, May 13. Excerpts from the letter are below:

"Representing the state of Wisconsin, we want to reiterate our strong support for Fort McCoy, Volk Field, and Mitchell and Truax Airfields. We would like to remind you the value these military facilities provide in protecting our nation's interests."

"Fort McCoy, Volk Field, and Mitchell and Truax Airfields are first-class installations that play a key role in support of military operations worldwide. They are home to many Guard members and Reservists who, as you know, now make up roughly 40 percent of the forces in Iraq. The Guard and Reserve are indispensable for protecting U.S. national security interests at home and abroad."

"Wisconsin's congressional delegation has worked extensively with Fort McCoy, Volk Field, Mitchell and Truax Airfields and the surrounding communities in Wisconsin to prepare for the 2005 BRAC round and provide information to accurately inform the DOD in its decision making process. Our efforts have resulted in the creation of several plans detailing the value of each of our military facilities to Wisconsin and the nation. These reports specify why each of the facilities should stay off the BRAC list."

"When examining the selection criteria for retention of capabilities, we feel our Wisconsin facilities fulfill, and many times exceed, the standards of the criteria. Especially in terms of their military value, Wisconsin's facilities demonstrate U.S. military "jointness;" Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force many times are operating at the same facility. Additionally, this is true in regards to number two of the criteria by having the necessary infrastructure, space, and strong community support to absorb additional missions and personnel from all branches of the military services. Moreover, these facilities continue to meet current DOD low cost of operation mandates."

"Overall, Wisconsin's bases provide critical training and readiness capabilities for military commands and installations that carry out important missions in the United States and abroad...the 128th Air Refueling Wing and the 440th Airlift Wing, based at Mitchell Airfield [for example], have been very active with Operation Iraqi Freedom...Further, Wisconsin's bases provide unmatched capabilities for carrying out critical missions to protect homeland security."

(more)

“We are very proud of our Wisconsin military facilities, and as we move forward to the next stage of the 2005 BRAC round, we are confident the DOD and the Base Realignment and Closure Commission will agree our facilities are indispensable not only to our national security through homeland defense, but to Guard, Reserve, and regular forces from around the country.”

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